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Modern Socialism

BY

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Modern Socialism

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REV. HERMAN J. MAECKEL, S. J.

I. WHAT IS MODERN SOCIALISM?

Socialism in its modern acceptance is "a system both economic and political, which advocates the abolition of private property in the means of production and the substitution therefor of collective ownership, with consequent collective control of the production and distribution of the goods produced by the entire people constituted into a democratic commonwealth."

All the latest platforms of Socialist parties assert these characteristics more or less explicitly. All demand the abolition of the present system of private property and the socialization of ownership in the means of production without limitation and restriction. The platform of the Socialist Labor Party says expressly that a summary end must be put to the present barbarous struggle by the abolition of classes and the restoration of the land and all the means of production, transportation, and distribution to the people as a collective body.

The national platform of the Socialist Party adopted in Chicago in 1904 declares: "Socialism means that all those things upon which the people in common depend shall by the people in common be owned and administered. It means that the tools of employment shall belong to their users and creators; that all production shall be for the direct use of the producers; that the making of goods for profit shall come to an end; that we shall be workers together, and that all opportunities shall be open and equal to all."

Private property, however, in the goods of consumption, such as food, clothing, dwellings, furniture, utensils, may be retained by the individual; but with this restriction, that they shall not be employed in productive enterprises. Under Socialism as explained by the American Socialist, a man may own his own house and furnish it in the most luxurious way. It is his own forever, to do with it as he pleases, except to let it out for rent. Even such productive property as a wheelbarrow or a sewing machine may remain private property, only not to be used as capital. Landowners, too, may retain permanently the land that they cultivate or occupy, but should be compelled to pay to the community annually the full rental value, exclusive of improvements. All business, however, shall be carried on by the entire people, all members of the community being obliged to contribute toward production by their labor.

The reason why modern Socialism advocates the social ownership of all means of production and the vesting of it in the entire people is laid down in the following consideration: Competition, oppression, and exploitation cannot be entirely abolished where private property goes on

with social production. But this will necessarily be the case if not all, but only a part, of the productive goods is socialized. In like manner anarchy of production, which is a necessary consequence of free competition, will not cease as long as there are many producers, no matter whether they be individual or corporate. Consequently, where order and justice in production are to prevail there can be but one owner of productive means, one controller and organizer of production. The natural conclusion drawn from this is that the workers must organize "to seize the whole powers of the government, in order that they may thereby lay hold of the whole system of industry, and thus come into their rightful inheritance." But if any one were to infer from this that the government should own the means of production, they say: "No, government ownership is not Socialism; it is not necessarily even a step to Socialism. Socialism means that the workers shall own and control the machinery of production, and dispose of the products as they like. Government ownership may mean, and if administered by the Republican and Democratic parties will mean, that the workers in the government industries will get the value of their labor power, and no more, and that the immense surplus produced by their labor will be controlled by the capitalist class." (*International Socialist Review*, August 1911, page 111.)

Accordingly, no one can be strictly considered a Socialist who does not hold the central doctrines of collective ownership and control. There are measures advocated by Socialists, and by them pronounced socialistic, which are not so, unless they are regarded as steps towards the socialistic ideal or forming part of a national scheme of reorganization. We are not Socialists because we are in favor of necessary legislative restrictions of individual liberty, in order that we may thereby protect the general and permanent physical and moral interests of the community. Again, State regulation of industry, taxation of incomes, municipal or national ownership and administration of business, such as railroads, the post-office, gas, electric cars, are not really socialistic, nor evidences of society drifting, as it is often said, towards Socialism. No doubt they may be fitted into a socialistic scheme. But as the facts show, they are quite compatible with the existing social order and, as long as the right of private capital stands unchallenged and intact, they cannot be called socialistic.

Now how are they going "to seize the whole powers of the government"? "The Socialist Party of America," we are told, "has two main functions. Of these the less important, although the more conspicuous, is to nominate and, if possible, elect Socialists to office. We have already elected some; we shall elect many more; but they have accomplished little in their official capacity for the working class, and in the nature of things can accomplish little. The really vital work which the Socialist Party has done, can do, and will do, is the education and organization of a body of clear-headed revolutionists, who understand the structure of capitalist society, who are determined to destroy it, and who can and will plan intelligently and work unitedly to that end." (*International Socialist Review*, July 1911, page 47.)

But if any one were to infer from this that Socialism means to rob the capitalists and to destroy property rights, the Socialists will tell him that he does not know what Socialism is. The truth, they say, is that Socialism is the only system of production and distribution that will guaran-

tee to every human being the possession of the private property to which he is entitled by reason of having produced it through his own efforts. The present capitalistic system, they claim, denies the individual the opportunity to own and control the product of his toil, which is the only private property that any one can rightfully own, as no one else can justly claim that which another has produced. The present capitalistic system is, furthermore, they assert, as has been scientifically proved by Marx, a system of exploitation (robbery), since it permits the capitalists to make profit of the land, tools and machinery which all the people must use in order to live. It allows the capitalists to use them for the purpose of enriching themselves, thus making the great mass of the people dependent on the few private owners, who can use this great power for every means of oppression and tyranny. Socialism, therefore, they infer, does not seek to rob any one or to destroy property rights; on the contrary, it would stop the long robbery of the worker through profits, interest and rents, and secure to each the right to own all the property he might produce.

II. PRINCIPLES OF MODERN SOCIALISM.

"The Socialism that inspires hopes and fears today," our American Socialists assert, "is that of the school of Marx. No one is seriously apprehensive of any other so-called Socialistic movement. All the Socialist parties of the world are based on the principles first stated by Marx and Engels." These principles are: "The materialistic conception of history" and the revealing of the secret of capitalist production by means of "surplus-value." "When the teaching of the Socialist philosophy upon these doctrines is clearly apprehended," Socialists tell us, "then Socialism follows as the logical and inevitable deduction."

A. M. Simons, formerly editor of the *International Socialist Review*, of Chicago, in his pamphlet, the "Philosophy of Socialism," writes: "The basis of Socialism is found in what is sometimes called 'the materialistic conception of history' or 'economic determinism'." In an article of his periodical, June 1904, he says: "The philosophy of Socialism as generally accepted by the Socialist parties of the world at the present time takes as its fundamental hypothesis what has been variously called the materialistic interpretation of history, historic materialism, or economic determinism."

According to the opinion of Engels it was by this conception of history that Socialism advanced to the rank of science. In this conception of history two elements are to be distinguished: first, the general theory and, secondly, its application in behalf of Socialism. Every Marxian Socialist must needs adopt the materialistic conception of history as the foundation of the edifice, but not everyone who accepts the theory must also necessarily draw from it the conclusion of Marx and his followers. Our American Socialists accept both the theory and its application.

The theory is that in any given epoch the one all-important and fundamental element in determining the social, legal and political institution are the economic conditions. This proposition is stated by Engels in the introduction to the Communist Manifesto in the following way: "In every historical epoch the prevailing mode of economic production and

exchange, and the social organization following from it, forms the basis upon which is built and from which alone can be explained the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolutions in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting class—the bourgeoisie—without at the same time, and once for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles.

This theory serves Marx as an explanation of modern economic development, whereby he intends to show that our modern capitalist society must needs bring forth as its natural result the Socialist order of society. In order to grasp the force of the argument we must take a look at his second great “discovery,” which in the opinion of Engels, has effected the transition of Socialism from the utopian to the scientific stage. This discovery is the doctrine of “surplus-value.”

The *theory of surplus-value* reveals the fact that the social system of any country or of any epoch shows that those who labor are exploited. One class of people live off the labor of the others; some partly off the labor of others and partly off the products of their own toil. And, as must be the case under such circumstances, there is always a class of people who do not get that which their labor produces. The fact of exploitation of labor is universal. It has gone on everywhere, and in all ages. The form changes but the fact remains. And sometimes it happens that change of the form, especially if it be from a severe to a milder one, conceals the fact of exploitation for a while. For example, the exploitation of labor under the form of slavery is clear enough. The same is true now with regard to serfdom. But when the form of exploitation changes from a brutal and offensive slavery to the milder form of serfdom, and then in recent times to the form of the wage-earner system, the fact of exploitation is not quite so glaring and apparent.

It is there, nevertheless. The exploitation of labor continues. When the capitalist buys the labor power of a workingman and thereby turns him into a wage-worker, he does so only because the wage-worker will produce more than he is paid for. If he only produced as much as he is paid for—and worse yet if he produced less—the capitalist would have no use for him, would not buy his labor power. The wage-worker employed by the capitalist is the wealth producer. Out of the wealth brought into life by the wage-worker, the capitalist takes a part and gives it to the wage-worker in payment for his labor, as his wages. The rest of the wealth produced by the wage-worker is the “surplus,” that is to say, the quantity of wealth produced by the worker over and above what was necessary to enable him to restore the forces expended in production. That surplus the capitalist keeps for himself; he calls it “Profit”; it constitutes his Income. Industrial capital, accordingly, hatches its profits by exploiting the propertyless wage-worker. Surplus-value is, therefore, essentially “the product of the unremunerated labor of others.” This surplus-value is the key to the whole present economic organization of society. The end and object of bourgeois society is the formation and accumulation of surplus-value, or in other words, the systematic robbery

of the producing class. There is thus an inherent antagonism between the two classes.

As the conflict takes shape it begins to develop remarkable features. At the one end we have the continued appropriation and accumulation of surplus-value, with the ever-increasing wealth and power of those in whose hands it is concentrated. At the other we have the progressive enslavement and degradation of the exploited classes. "The number of proletarians increases," says the Erfurt platform, "the army of superfluous workers assumes greater dimensions from day to day; the conflict between the oppressor and the oppressed is becoming more and more violent—that conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat which divides modern society into two hostile camps and is the common characteristic of all industrial nations."

As the development continues, the workers, on the one hand, gradually come to recognize their position as a class and become possessed of a sense of their common interests. On the other hand, the competition amongst the capitalist class is great and continually growing; the larger capitalists gradually extinguish the smaller ones, and wealth becomes accumulated in fewer and fewer hands. The state of things becomes at length intolerable; there is anarchy in production, accompanied by constantly-recurring crises—"crises," as the Erfurt program says, "which become ever more extensive and destructive, make universal insecurity the normal state of society, and give evidence that the productive forces of our age have become uncontrollable by society, and that private property in the means of production has become incompatible with their proper utilization and full development." Then the organized wage-workers seize possession of the means of production (land and capital) transforming them into public property, and Socialist production becomes henceforth possible.

Now, the question arises: "How are the means of production (land and capital) of a country, say of the United States, to pass into public ownership and to be brought under public administration?" Will it be done by purchase or by confiscation pure and simple?

To these questions the Socialist platforms give no definite answer. But even the most peaceful Socialists hardly expect that the property of the capitalist can be brought under public administration without a terrible struggle of classes. Marx and Engels themselves declare, "that their purposes can be attained only by a violent subversion of the existing order." "Let the ruling classes," we read in the Communist Manifesto, "tremble at the communist revolution." "We must," said Marx at the congress of the Hague in 1872, "finally have recourse to violence in order to establish the rule of labor." And in his work on Capital, he exclaims: "Violence is the obstetrician that waits on every ancient society which is about to give birth to a new one; violence is in itself a social factor."

The *theory of equality of rights among men* is another of the fundamental tenets of modern socialism. The socialist demand for equality assumes a twofold aspect, one moderate and the other extreme. The moderate view is that of Marx and Engels. These two luminaries of scientific socialism describe the equality of men aimed at by socialists for the present as the abolition of all class distinctions: every one is to be a laborer like all the rest and to get his share of the social product

according to the measure of his labor. The demand for equality in its extreme form is the demand for perfect and absolute equality of rights. It acknowledges no diversity of rights and duties. It is in this sense that the demand for equality is taken by the great majority of socialists. "They cease not from asserting," says Pope Leo in his encyclical 'Apostolici Muneris', 'that all men are by nature equal, and hence they contend that neither honor nor respect is owed to public authority, nor any obedience to the laws, saving perhaps to those which have been sanctioned according to their good pleasure' "The Socialists," moreover, "'wrongly assume the right of private property to be of mere human invention, repugnant to the natural equality between men, and, preaching up the community of goods, declare that no one should endure poverty meekly, and that all may with impunity seize upon the possessions and usurp the rights of the wealthy."

III. MODERN SOCIALISM AND PRIVATE PROPERTY.

Modern Socialism denies the right of private property and recognizes as lawful only collective ownership in the means of production and distribution, considering the former as the source of all our social ills and regarding the latter as the necessary condition for the peace and happiness of the human race. But Leo XIII. has expressly condemned this fundamental tenet of Socialism as erroneous and contrary to the divine truth. He asserts the right of private ownership in the means of production not only as natural and innate in man, but also as necessary for the welfare of mankind, and hence regards its abolition and the substitution for it of public ownership as unjust and detrimental to social peace and order.

The State or community has no right to abolish private property in the means of production, because private property in those means is not a social right, but an individual right derived from nature, not derived from the State.

Nay, the State is in duty bound to acknowledge, respect, and guard private property, just as it is in duty bound to acknowledge, respect and guard all the rights of the subject that come from nature and are in reason anterior to the State. For, as Pope Leo says, "if the citizens of a State—in other words, the families—on entering into association and fellowship, were to experience at the hands of the State hindrance instead of help, and were to find their rights attacked instead of being upheld, such association should be held in detestation, rather than an object of desire."

We go further than this. We maintain that not even the consent of all the States could sanction the abolition of private property in the means of production. The only case in which it could be abolished would be if all men, taken individually, one by one, consented thereto. But that compact would only bind those individuals who had consented thereto, but not their children, since they would receive the right of having means of production, not from their parents, but from nature. The assertion, therefore, is false that the State or the community, if they judge it expedient, may force people to have property in common.

But here somebody will step in and tell us that Socialism does not attack the right of private property. He will say: "Socialism, it is true, would abolish private property in capital, but the latter institution is not an end in itself. Nor is it necessary as an immediate means to the welfare

or development of the person possessing it. Personal liberty is necessary for the welfare of the individual. Not so with property in productive goods; the individual, any and every individual, can properly develop his personality without exercising those activities that are involved in the ownership of capital. So far as the individual is concerned, this kind of property is necessary only as a means to the possession and ownership of goods of consumption. Consequently, if the latter end could be obtained under Socialism, that is to say, if the collectivity provided every person with the power of owning those material goods that are immediately requisite for the self-development and for the family life, the individual need for private property in the instruments of production would cease to exist. The individual would still possess and own all the material goods essential to right living."

We grant that this argument shows that man can get along without the ownership of means of production; but it does not prove that Socialism can rightfully take away from the individual the right of possessing such goods. For every individual has a right to acquire property in land and in capital, and he is supposed to exercise this right when he engages in remunerative labor. For as Pope Leo says: "It is surely undeniable that when a man engages in remunerative labor, the impelling reason and motive of his work is to obtain property, and thereafter to hold it as his very own. If one man hires out to another his strength or skill, he does so for the purpose of receiving in return what is necessary for sustenance and education; he therefore expressly intends to acquire a right full and real, not only to the remuneration, but also to the disposal of such remuneration, just as he pleases. . . . It is precisely in such power of disposal that ownership obtains, whether the property consists of land or chattels."

This doctrine of Pope Leo is confirmed by Pope Pius X. in his *Motu proprio* "Popular Catholic Action," where he says that "the right of private property, the fruit of labor or industry, or of cession or donation by others, is an incontrovertible natural right; and everybody can dispose reasonably of such property as he thinks fit."—He, furthermore, declares that "of the goods of the earth man has not merely the use, like brute creation, but he has also the right of permanent proprietorship—and not merely of those things which are consumed by use, but also of those which are not consumed by use."

But, while we condemn Socialism as against the Law of God and the rights of men, we should also insist upon the duties and limitations which are, according to Catholic doctrine, attached to the rights of ownership.

There is a *duty of charity* towards those who are in need. "It is an obligation for the rich and for those that own property to succor the poor and the indigent, according to the precepts of the Gospel. This obligation is so grave that on the Day of Judgment special account will be demanded of its fulfilment, as Christ Himself has said." (Matthew XXV.) There is, furthermore, a *duty of justice* imposed on the employers. "It is their duty," says Pope Pius X., "to pay just wages to the workmen; not to injure their just savings by violence or fraud, or by overt or covert usuries; not to expose them to corrupting seductions and danger of scandal; not to alienate them from the spirit of family life and from love of economy; not to impose on them labor beyond their strength nor unsuitable for their sex." (*Motu proprio* "Popular Catholic Action").

IV. MODERN SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

Thomas Kirkup in his book, "An Inquiry into Socialism," informs us that "it is still by many believed that Socialism tends to subvert the family and the Christian ideal of marriage." "Some of the leading Socialist writers," he admits, "have indeed enunciated theories at variance with these institutions. But it should be remembered," he says, "that such opinions are not peculiar to Socialism, and that they have been most strenuously opposed within the Socialist schools." "As a theory of economic organization," he concludes, "we cannot see that Socialism can have any special teaching adverse to marriage and the family." And Professor Richard Ely in his book, "Outlines of Economics," maintains that "a number of questions having no connection with Socialism have been, even by Socialists, not infrequently associated with it. Infidelity and free love may be mentioned." But "of course," he says, "these have nothing to do with Socialism."

Now, what are we to think of this? Is it true that "Socialism as a theory of economic organization has no special teaching adverse to marriage and the family"? Most assuredly it is not true. The present marriage system, Socialists tell us, is based on the general supposition of the economic dependence of woman on the man, and the consequent necessity for his making provision for her, which she can legally enforce. This basis would disappear with the advent of social economic freedom, and no binding contract would be necessary between the parties as regards livelihood; while property in children would cease to exist, and every infant would be born into full citizenship. Thus a new development of the family would take place, an association terminable at the need of either party.

Engels, in his "Origin of the Family" (pages 91 and 99) says: "Three great obstacles block the path of reform, private property, religion and the present form of marriage . . . With the transformation of the means of production into collective property the monogamic marriage ceases to be the common unit of society. The private household changes to a social industry. The care and education of the children become a public matter. Society cares equally for all children, legal or illegal."

In other words, marriage is no more recognized by law; parental care and responsibilities are wholly abrogated if the individual so elects, because the State in abolishing the present system of property assumes all those responsibilities.

But here the doctrines of Socialism stand in flagrant contradiction to the teachings of the Church. Pope Leo, in his encyclical on the "Condition of Labor," says: "Parental authority can be neither abolished nor absorbed by the State; for it has the same source as human life itself." "The child belongs to the father," and is, as it were, the continuation of the father's personality; and, speaking strictly, the child takes its place in civil society not of its own right, but in its quality as a member of the family in which it is born. And for the very reason that "the child belongs to the father," it is, as St. Thomas of Aquin says, "before it attains the use of free-will, under power and charge of its parents." "The Socialists, therefore, in setting aside the parent and setting up a State supervision, act against natural justice, and break into pieces the stability of the family."

But let us suppose that marriage were to continue as it is, the children surely would not be brought up at home. All are to work for the State, the women as well as the men. The mother, therefore, will not be able to devote her time to her young children, nor can she employ any one else to look after them at home, since the State is to be the only employer. "Every child," says Bebel, "that comes into the world, whether male or female, is a welcome addition to society; for society beholds in every child the continuation of itself and its own further development; it therefore perceives from the very outset the duty, according to its power, to provide for the new-born child." The children must, therefore, be taken at the earliest possible age into the care of the State, and this is the Socialist ideal. All means of education and instruction, even clothing and food, will be supplied by the State. The Erfurt platform demands: "Secularization of the schools. Compulsory attendance at the public schools. Instruction, use of all means of instruction, and board free of charge in all public elementary schools and in the higher institutions of learning for such pupils of both sexes as, on account of their talents, are judged fit for higher studies." The American Socialist Party platform adopted in Chicago, 1904, advocates "education of all children up to the age of eighteen years, and State and municipal aid for books, clothing, and food."

Thus the chief duty for the sake of which marriage has been instituted as an indissoluble union would cease to exist; for a lifelong union and cooperation on the part of parents are not required for the mere propagation of children. As Pope Leo has it in his encyclical on "Christian Marriage": "By the command of Christ," he says, "marriage looks not only to the propagation of the human race, but to the bringing forth of children for the Church, fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God; so that a people might be born and brought up for the worship and religion of the true God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." . . . Parents are bound to give all care and watchful thought to the education of their offspring and their virtuous bringing up: "Fathers, bring them up (that is, your children) in the discipline and correction of the Lord" (Eph. vi, 4). To the parent belongs the right to educate the child.

From this we clearly see that the doctrine of the Church is very different from the teaching and demands of Socialism. The demands of Socialism, however, are quite logical. For if Socialism is to effect absolute equality in the conditions of life it must, first of all, remove the universal source of inequality, namely, unequal education; and this can be done only by making education a social concern.

But Socialists do not stop here. According to their leaders, neither the state nor organized religion should have ought to do with control of the family or of the sexual relation. They would make love supreme. They would have it unfettered by any tie whatsoever. They argue that compulsory love is not love; that all marriage save from love is sin; that when love ends marriage ends. For this statement we have the important testimony of Bax, the renowned English Socialist and author. In his book, "Outlook from a New Standpoint," pages 114 to 159, he says: "There are few points on which the advanced radicals and Socialists are more completely in accord than their theoretical hostility to the modern legal monogamic marriage. The majority of them hold it, even at the

present time and in the existing state of society, to be an evil. . . . To live in a state of unlegalized marriage defileth not a man, nor woman neither. . . . Enforced monogamy and its correlative prostitution are the great historical antithesis of civilization. . . . Socialism will strike at the root at once of compulsory Monogamy. . . . Where the wish of the maintenance of the marriage relation remains, there is external compulsion unnecessary. Where it is necessary, because the wish has disappeared, there it is undesirable. . . . Now, a man may justly contend he is perfectly at liberty to join himself temporarily or permanently with a woman. . . . It would in no wise be immoral, provided it were done without hypocrisy.”

Surely, if this is the doctrine of Socialism, and nobody can doubt it, then C. S. Devas is right when he says: “The sacred union of man and woman for mutual help, for educating and supporting their children, for providing for their future welfare, the sense of mutual responsibility and care, the true and healthy communism, that of the home, the countless cooperative associations which each family forms, the thousand ties of dependence that are occasion for the display of the best qualities of human nature—this realm of self-devotion and self-sacrifice—all this becomes unmeaning and impossible where the Socialist State provides for the nourishment and education and technical training and material and moral outfit of each child. The moral office of parents is gone, the sacred enclosure of home is violated, the sacred words father, mother, sister, have been degraded to a lower meaning, and the next step is to reduce the rearing of man under approved physicians and physiologists and the latest professors of eugenics, to the level of a prize-cattle farm. The Christian family and Collectivism are incompatible; their antagonism is so deep-rooted that reconciliation is impossible.”

V. MODERN SOCIALISM AND RELIGION.

Socialists never get tired of repeating that Socialism is a purely economic system which does not advance doctrines touching matters of religion, ethics, and natural law; that the Socialist party is a purely political party which always refrained from taking stand on the question of religion in its platforms and other official utterances. Of course, they say, many Socialists are atheists; but what has this to do with the Socialist party? The Republican party, too, numbers amongst its adherents atheists, and so does the Democratic party. Atheism, however, is no more a part of Socialism than it is a part of Republicanism or Democracy. Some Socialists are earnest Christians, not a few sincere ministers of the Gospel. Many Catholics, Protestants and Jews vote the Socialist ticket. As there are good and bad Republicans and Democrats, so there are good and bad Socialists. If every time a Republican or Democrat was guilty of a criminal act all the newspapers said, “That is what comes of being a Republican or Democrat,” we might feel inclined to think that all of them are criminals. It is, therefore, a mistake to believe because some atheists are Socialists all Socialists are atheists.

Now, we willingly admit that from the fact “because some atheists are Socialists” it does not at once follow “that all Socialists are atheists.” We also concede that some earnest Christians and not a few sincere ministers of the Gospel call themselves Christian Socialists. We are, furthermore, not ignorant of the fact that many Catholics, Protestants

and Jews, actuated by economic and political motives, vote the Socialist ticket. But we do not believe that Socialist leaders and class-conscious Socialists who are fully imbued with the principles of Socialism are or can be good Christians. For this we have the express testimony of Socialists themselves. James Leatham, a prominent English Socialist, writes:

"At the present moment I cannot remember a single instance of a person who is at one and the same time a really earnest and intelligent Socialist and an orthodox Christian. Those who do not openly attack the Church and the fabric of Christianity show but scant respect to either one or the other in private. . . . And while all of us are thus indifferent to the Church, many of us are frankly hostile to her. Marx, Lassalle, and Engels among earlier Socialists, Morris, Bax, Hyndman, Guesde and Bebel among present-day Socialists, are all more or less avowed atheists, and what is true of the more notable men of the party is almost equally true of the rank and file the world over." (Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism, p. 85.)

And the *New Yorker Volkszeitung*, the principal representative of scientific Socialism in New York State, under date of October 9, 1901, correctly characterized the attitude of Socialism toward religion in the following words:

"Socialism and belief in the Divinity as taught by Christianity and its representatives, do not agree; cannot agree; are diametrically opposed to one another. Socialism is logical only when it denies the existence of God, when it maintains that we do not need the so-called assistance of God, since we are able to help ourselves. Only he who has no faith begins to feel that he can accomplish something. The laborer who places confidence in God, and who, with Christian resignation, thinks that all done by God is well done—how can that laborer develop revolutionary forces for the overthrow of authority and social order, both of which, according to his faith, are instituted by God. As long as he clings to this belief he will not be able to acquire a genuinely revolutionary spirit."

But what about the platforms and official utterances of the Socialist party? Do they always refrain from taking stand on the question of religion? Surely not. The National Platform of the Socialist Party of America, adopted May 5, 1904, contains the following passage: "As an American Socialist Party, we pledge our fidelity to the principles of international Socialism, as embodied in the united thought and action of the Socialists of all nations." Now what does that mean? It certainly means that they adhere to the principles of Marxian Socialism, the principles of the materialistic conception of history and class-struggle.

Now, if this is the case, and nobody can deny it, then Socialism is essentially materialistic and un-Christian. For the materialistic conception of history contains the following tenets: "That there is no dualism of spirit and matter;" that "beyond nature and man there exists nothing;" that "those higher beings created by our religious fancy are but the fantastic reflections of our own being;" that "the ultimate causes of social changes and revolutions are not to be looked for in the brains of men and in their growing comprehension of eternal truth and justice, but in the changes affecting the manner of production and exchange; that the whole history of mankind has been a history of class-struggles."

Any one who has a firm grasp of these principles will understand that according to this materialistic conception of history, religion is always the result of the prevailing economic conditions; that, consequently, it is not divine, but human; not stable and above time, but changeable and dependent on economic conditions; that there is no personal God, no Providence watching over the destinies of mankind, no spiritual, immortal soul, no retribution in a life to come. Socialist leaders are fully aware of these consequences, and make them their own.

Karl Marx calls religion an "absurd sentiment," a "fantastic degradation of human nature." "Man," he says, "makes religion, not religion man. Religion is the sentiment of a heartless world, as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the opium of the people. Religion is the illusory sun, which revolves around man as long as man fails to revolve around himself. Religion is the self-consciousness of a human being that has either not yet found itself or again lost itself." (Rev. John Ming, S.J., "The Characteristics and the Religion of Modern Socialism." p. 202).

Engels expresses his contempt for religion in almost the same terms as Marx. In his criticism of the Socialist platform he demanded that the Labor Party declare its intention "of delivering men's consciences from the specter of religion."

Such are the declarations concerning God and religion made by the founders of modern Socialism; declarations which are conclusions drawn with logical necessity from the fundamental tenets of the materialistic conception of history; declarations, therefore, which must be accepted as genuine statements of socialist thought.

It need not be mentioned that thereby Christianity, its doctrines of paradise, of original sin, of redemption by means of the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ, of heaven and hell are thrown overboard. "As to redemption in particular," says Blatchford in his infamous book, "God and My Neighbor," "there is neither a God-man that could accomplish it, nor is there anything in man that should require it. For as there exists no God, no incarnation of a divine person is possible. Nor could man contract a guilt in the sight of a non-existing God, or fear a punishment in the life to come, if there is no immortal spirit in him." There is according to socialist views only one evil from which man needs to be rescued, oppression and exploitation of the possessing classes, and only one true and real good which he must pursue as his happiness, the peace and abundance of the co-operative commonwealth. To rescue him from this one evil and secure him this one happiness is the object of the socialist movement. Socialism, therefore, and not Christianity is the only redemption of mankind. All this is loudly and emphatically heralded by socialist writers. The Berlin *Vorwaerts* says in a Christmas reflection: "We believe in no Redeemer, but believe in redemption. No man saw God in human form, no Saviour did redeem humanity. Only humanity itself—only laboring humanity—will save humanity."

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